

APPENDIX I

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA TOD POLICY STATEMENT

I Problem Statement

The Washington Metropolitan Region has grown tremendously over the past three decades. However, this growth has been uneven. Suburban counties have experienced rapid population growth, over-crowded schools, sprawling commercial development, and suburban highways choked with commuters. The District, meanwhile, has witnessed an exodus of population, school closures, disinvestment in traditional neighborhood main streets, and neighborhood streets choked with commuters.

During this exodus, the District lost more than just residents; it lost tax revenues, vibrant neighborhood centers, and environmental health for our residents. While the development of MetroRail has resulted in has resulted in a significant amount of development within walking distance of stations, unless a clear policy is set forth directing growth back to urbanized areas served by transit future growth in the metropolitan area will continue the typical "sprawl" development patterns that have so far handicapped the District financially, environmentally, and socially.





II District Goals

The District of Columbia, under the vision and leadership of Mayor Anthony Williams, has set forth a set of goals that promote financial stability, exemplify democratic principles and seek to restore Washington as a world-class city worthy of distinction as the Nation's Capitol. These goals include:

- Engaging citizens in making real change
- Making neighborhoods safe
- Promoting economic development for all neighborhoods
- Promoting homeownership and housing options at all income levels

- Retaining existing residents
- Increasing city tax revenues
- Making efficient use of underutilized land and infrastructure
- Enhancing and improving community amenities and neighborhood quality of life



III Opportunity: Transit-Oriented Development

For the first time in several decades the District is once again gaining population. Current trends indicate a favorable market demand for transit-oriented development across the District. A renewed interest in urban living has led to rising housing markets and a need to provide housing that is affordable. These trends, along with a growing demand for urban housing that offers reduced commute times and urban amenities, point to increasing market demand and potential for TOD projects.

By utilizing the \$10 billion plus capital investment of our Metro bus and rail systems, the District has the opportunity to bring back some of the lost population, grow the tax base, reestablish safe and vibrant neighborhood centers, and decrease auto dependency and related air pollution to the benefit of our neighborhoods and the region as a whole.

By planning for and guiding growth toward areas with good bus and MetroRail service, the District can utilize transit to improve District residents' access to housing, employment, and recreational choices and opportunities across the District and region and guiding well-designed development to where it is welcome, appropriate, and best accommodated.

IV A Logical Step

Transit-Oriented Development helps the District achieve implementation of existing plans - from the original Comprehensive Plan that calls for concentrating development around Metro stations, to specific community plans to create coherent and active neighborhood centers. It is a fiscally responsible approach that capitalizes on and leverages the past investments in and existing resource of our nationally renowned regional transit system. This type of planning approach returns underutilized assets, such as vacant or abandoned properties or publicly owned parcels, to positive uses that contribute to strong neighborhood centers. Transit-oriented development creates centers for civic life and economic exchange in our neighborhoods then links them together with other opportunities and options throughout the region. Finally transit-oriented development increases safety, attractiveness, and livability for neighborhoods, the District and the region.

V Policy Development: Mayoral Task Force on Transit Oriented Development

To help formulate an appropriate and comprehensive policy for transit-oriented development unique to the District of Columbia, Mayor Anthony A. Williams convened a Task Force to look at the opportunities and obstacles for TOD and develop a set of policy recommendations and implementation tools. The Task Force included community leaders, regional advocates, national experts, educators, developers, financiers, the regional transit agency, and other local, regional and federal partners and was co-chaired by Andrew Altman, the Director of Planning for the District, and Dan Tangherlini, the Acting Director of Transportation for the District.

Additional voices, perspectives, and expertise were also solicited and included in developing the recommendations. Two focus groups were convened – one consisting of community members and neighborhood business representatives from every ward of the District and a second representing property owners, developers, financial institutions, and non-profit organizations. The input of these groups gave a finer level of detail to both issues and opportunities for TOD. A Technical Working Group supported the Task Force and further explored the recommendations and defined the realistic prospects and needs for their implementation.

VI District of Columbia TOD Policy

Neighborhood residents and District government agents recognize that neighborhoods are constantly changing. At issue is not necessarily how TOD will change neighborhoods – the neighborhoods will change anyway – but how neighborhoods will change with TOD policies in place versus how they will change without them. Past experience has demonstrated that without a definitive TOD policy, development around Metro stations has often been unpredictable, lacked early and meaningful community involvement, has not fully utilized the transit resource, and has not responded to community visions articulated in the Ward and Comprehensive Plans.

Neighborhoods will change. Recognizing this, the District of Columbia, through its chief planner the Mayor, has established the following policy for transit-oriented development. Development proposals in designated transit-areas shall respond to the unique needs of each community and utilize our investment in bus and rail systems by:

- Meaningfully engaging citizens in planning and developments proposed in their communities;
- Protecting existing neighborhood residents and businesses while attracting and providing for new residents and activities;
- Concentrating activities at and around transit stations and major bus corridors and transfer points;
- Maximizing transit access, usage and convenience to encourage transit, bike, and walking as preferred modes for transportation;
- Providing a mix of uses for a diversity of activities, goods and services easily accessible by transit;
- Providing quality urban design that increases pedestrian and bicycle safety, amenities and enjoyment;
- Excluding predominantly auto-oriented uses (such as drive-through services, gas stations, surface parking lots, etc.); and
- Supporting the expansion and enhancement of the transit system to link neighborhood centers and provide efficient and reliable connections across the District and region.

At issue is not if neighborhoods will change, but how neighborhoods will change with TOD policies versus how they will change without.